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Sept. 4
1852

NATIONAL POLITICS.

SPEECH

OF

HON. CHAS. JAS. FAULKNER,

OF VIRGINIA,

AT READING, PENNSYLVANIA,

SEPTEMBER 4, 1852.

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[*From the Pennsylvanian of Monday, September 6, 1852.*]

THE GREAT MEETING OF THE DEMOCRACY AT READING.

30,000 FREEMEN IN COUNCIL!

THE DEMOCRACY OF THE OLD KEYSTONE AROUSED!

Buchanan, Douglas, Bigler, Lowe, and Faulkner, the talent and the bone and sinew of the Democracy of the East, West, North and South, in the field, battling with willing hearts and hands for Pierce, King, and the Union!

On Saturday, pursuant to notice, the political friends and advocates of the election of Pierce and King assembled at the citadel of Democracy—the city of Reading—to the number of thirty thousand.

There were delegations in attendance from Philadelphia, Lancaster, Lebanon, Dauphin, Chester, Montgomery, Bucks, Schuylkill, Lehigh, and other counties. The town of Pottsville sent a strong delegation, with a fine band.

The Spring Garden delegation was very full, and had a neat white banner, with black border, having thereon the inscription—"We hail from the District of Spring Garden." They were headed by the United States brass band, in their splendid uniforms.

The delegation from the Northern Liberties looked remarkably well. They were accompanied by a band of music, and had a number of beautiful flags.

The delegation from the district of Penn made a very creditable appearance, and were preceded by a tasty banner, bearing these words—"District of Penn—Pierce and King."

The delegation from Dauphin county turned out in goodly numbers, and were preceded by an excellent brass band, and displayed several pretty star-spangled banners.

There were also present two fine German bands from Philadelphia.

The Ringgold Artillery, of Reading, commanded by Captain James McKnight, paraded in full uniform, with a fine band of music.

Most of the hotels were decorated with handsome flags, many of them bearing the inscription "Pierce and King;" and all these houses were filled to overflowing with people from all parts of this State, Virginia, and Maryland.

After several delegations and the military had paraded the several streets, they gathered in front of the grand Rostrum, which was erected in Centre Square, near the western market-house. It was tastefully decorated with banners and flags, and the United States brass band and a German band were in attendance upon it, and played some lively airs in their best style.

Precisely at 12 o'clock the meeting was called to order by Horn R. Kneass, esq., one of the members of the State Central Committee; in behalf of which body he moved that the Hon. James Buchanan officiate as President of the meeting, which was unanimously agreed to amid great applause.

On motion of H. R. Kneass, esq., it was resolved unanimously that Gov. Lowe, of Maryland, and Gov. Bigler, of Pennsylvania, take position on the right and left of the President.

Horn R. Kneass, esq., here read the following list of officers of the meeting, which was unanimously agreed to:

President—Hon. James Buchanan.

Vice Presidents.—Hon. Joel B. Dana, of Adams county; Col. Samuel W. Black, of Allegheny county; John S. Rhey, of Armstrong county; John Cessna, of Bedford county; Hon. J. Glancy Jones, of Berks county; Hon. John Laporte, of Bradford county; Hon. Thomas Ross, of Bucks county; Thomas J. Power, of Beaver county; Hon. Alfred Gilmore, of Butler county; Hon. George R. McFarlane, of Blair county; John O'Neill, of Cambria county; Asa Packer, of Carbon county; Col. James Burnside, of Centre county; Hon. John A. Morrison, of Chester county; Wm. T. Alexander, of Clarion county; George R. Barrite, of Clearfield county; Charles R. Buckalew, of Columbia county; J. Porter Brawley, of Crawford county; George W. Brewer, of Cumberland county; Hon. Wm. Dock, of Dauphin county; Alex'r McKeever, of Delaware county; Hon. J. L. Gillis, of Elk county; Hon. John Galbraith, of Erie county; Hon. John L. Dawson, of Fayette county; Hon James X. McLanahan, of Franklin county; W. F. Schell, of Fulton county; Hon. Charles Black, of Greene county; John Dougherty, of Jefferson county; Hon. Augustus Drum, of Indiana county; Hon. Andrew Parker, of Juniata county; Lot Watson, of Lawrence county; Col. Wm. B. Fordney, of Lancaster county; John Weidman, of Lebanon county; Willoughby Fogel, of Lehigh county; Hon. Andrew Beaumont,

of Luzerne county; Hon. James Gamble, of Lycoming county; Hon Robert J. Hogue, of Mercer county; Thaddeus Banks, of Mifflin county; Solomon Barstow, of McKean county; Hon. John McNair, of Montgomery county; E. H. Baldy, of Montour county; Hon. M. M. Dimmick, of Monroe county; Gen. A. H. Reeder, of Northampton county; Hon L. Dewart, of Northumberland county; Wm. H. Miller, of Perry county; James Magee and Robt. Ewing, of Philadelphia city; Hon. Thomas B. Florence, Hon. John Robbins, jr., Hugh Malone, John S. Hoffman, and H. G. Sickles, of Philadelphia county; Henry S. Mott, of Pike county; Chas. Lyman, of Potter county; Charles Frailey, of Schuylkill county; Isaac Hugus, of Somerset county; Hon. G. A. Grow, of Susquehanna county; Hon. John R. Jones, of Sullivan county; Hon. John W. Guernsey, of Tioga county; Wm. H. Lamberton, of Venango county; Charles Schreiner, of Union county; Hon. Nathaniel P. Eldred, of Wayne county; Gen. Wm. L. Calihan, of Washington county; Hon. Wm. D. Foster, of Westmoreland county; Hon. Charlton B. Curtis, of Warren county; S. S. Winchester, of Wyoming county; and Hon. Wm. H. Kurtz, of York county.

Secretaries.—Wm. M. Heister, of Berks county; Robert J. Niven, of Susquehanna county; John Hamilton, jr., of Philadelphia city; John Oakford, John Batzig, and Henry L. Horn, of Philadelphia county; Col. L. F. Frank, of Lehigh county; Col. James Jeffries, of Dauphin county; Wm. P. Withington, of Lancaster county; Jacob Leisenring, of Northumberland county; and James C. Van Dyke, of Philadelphia city.

On motion of David Pool, esq., of Harrisburg, Col. James Jeffries, of Dauphin, was added to the list of secretaries.

The Hon. James Buchanan being loudly called for, came forward amid repeated cheering and addressed the meeting.

He was followed by Hon. Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois; Gov. Bigler, of Pennsylvania, and Gov. Lowe, of Maryland; when the president of the day, Hon. James Buchanan, introduced to the meeting the Hon. Chas. James Faulkner, of Virginia, as the representative in Congress of a portion of the Tenth Legion of Virginia Democracy, which announciation was received with immense and prolonged cheering.

Mr. Faulkner said: I thank you, fellow-citizens of Pennsylvania, for the cordial manner in which you have received one who is a perfect stranger to you. I thank you on my own account, and I thank you on behalf of the Tenth Legion of Virginia democracy. And here permit me to say that I am reminded of an incident which occurred during our late war with Great Britain. When Decatur was bearing down on the Macedonian, and ready to open his batteries upon her, an officer came up and said: "Sir, the men wish to cheer." "Let them first take the ship, and then cheer," was the reply. Now, whilst I have not less confidence in the result of the approaching action than that which was felt by the gallant commodore, I shall hear the cheers from the democracy with much greater pleasure after the second Tuesday in November next. Let Pennsylvania do her duty, and we *shall* hear them.

Fellow-countrymen, I have come from the South in the same spirit in which the Roman student of old made his pilgrimage to the classic groves of Athens—to drink at the pure, undefiled well of northern democracy. [Cheers.] I stand in the midst of the firm, the unconquerable, the ever-conquering democracy of Berks, [cheers,] in the heart of the Tenth Legion of Pennsylvania democracy. [Cheers.] I have come here with no idle intent. I have come here with an object, and for a purpose. I have come from Virginia to see with my own eyes and to hear with my own ears how the men of Pennsylvania respond to the true principles of our great federal compact. Virginia and Pennsylvania, united in the field of party warfare, have so far proved themselves equal to a world in arms. From the foundation of the government to the present hour, the republican party has never sustained a defeat when these two powerful States have stood shoulder to shoulder in the fight. I can, then, say to you with emphasis and power, that

Virginia is sound—sound to the core; safe beyond dispute or cavil, and with untold thousands to spare from the ballot-box. The Scott column of Virginia—following the lead of false guides and treacherous counsels—is now fairly hemmed in between the Cauldine forks. Any attempt to pass its northern or its southern defile must be alike fatal to it. On the south stands a democratic host, panting for the contest and flushed with the hopes of anticipated victory. On the north yawns the fearful chasms of abolition. No free-soil triumph will ever flash its glories over that field of fight. Though Scott be a native of the Old Dominion, she knows him not in his present claim upon her sympathies. As the Spartan mother said to her recreant son, who returned from battle without his shield—"Go back and return *with* your shield, or *upon* it"—so does Virginia say to Winfield Scott: Return with the principles which I taught you before you left my soil, or return never more. So long as Scott headed our gallant army against Mexico, and fought in the true line of his profession, his march was triumphant, his career brilliant. But the Samson of war has been shorn of his strength by the modern Delilahs of abolition; and if he should ever hereafter again, under the custody of his Philistine guardians, acquire strength and power, it can only be, I fear, to pull down upon your heads and mine, and his own, the pillars of our constitution. I have told you what the prospect of the campaign is in Virginia. Is it equally safe in Pennsylvania? [Shouts from the crowd, "It is—it is."] If so, then the Union is safe, the constitution is safe, sectional agitation will be forever extinguished, and the plotters and conspirators against our peace will be driven to their obscure dens, where the light of day will never reach them.

Freemen of Pennsylvania, if I cannot find patriots here, where can I go to look for them? If you do not love the Union, and reverence that constitution under whose glorious auspices you enjoy the unnumbered blessings which seem everywhere showered upon you, where upon this continent are friends of the Union to be found? God, in his goodness, never gave to man a nobler heritage than that which you here possess; and every object that met my eye, as the merry and rattling car brought me in view of your luxuriant fields, your well-cultivated farms, your richly-stored granaries, and your comfortable homesteads, all prove that you know how to value the blessings which a kind Providence has bestowed upon you.

I come from the Valley of Virginia—from a soil not inferior to your own in natural fertility, but somewhat inferior to yours in careful and judicious cultivation. A large portion of that beautiful valley has been settled by Pennsylvanians, and the descendants from the farmers of old Berks may be now seen occupying some of the fairest portions of that productive region. Your instinct in finding out good land is as unerring as your instinct in discerning what is safe in politics. Many names that I have heard to-day are as familiar to me as household words in my own county. My people are not strangers to you in blood. There are many amongst us who are bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh. My own mother was a Pennsylvanian, and some portion of the love we bear our mother is always very naturally transferred to the soil from which she sprung. My grandfather was for

many years a resident of this State; he had the command of a Pennsylvania company in the battle of Brandywine, fought not far distant from this spot, was shot down in that bloody encounter, and carried in his body to the grave the British lead which he received on that day.

In that valley resided a noble and glorious son of Pennsylvania—a man of the temper and intellect of Luther—bold, original, and reforming, and suited by his genius to grace alike the pulpit or the plume of battle. I mean General Peter Muhlenberg—a patriot of the Revolution; a man who as early as the 16th of June, 1774, announced at a public meeting in Woodstock the great principles, and foreshadowed the results, of the Declaration of Independence, and who shed, by his early career, a military halo over the fame of Virginia, and by his declining life, a civil glory over that of Pennsylvania.

I must, even at the risk of being regarded tedious, relate an incident in the life of this extraordinary man, which is not generally known. At the commencement of the revolutionary war he was a clergyman of the Lutheran church, his father having been the founder of that church in America. In December, 1775, Virginia called for six additional regiments. Peter Muhlenberg and Patrick Henry were commissioned as colonels—the only two civilians to whom regiments were assigned. Muhlenberg gave notice to his congregation of his intention to deliver his farewell sermon in Woodstock. The day came, and with it an immense concourse of his friends and admirers, for all in that valley were such. At the close of an eloquent sermon he recounted the dangers which threatened the liberties of his country, and the obligations which devolved upon every man to unsheath his sword in the cause of freedom. He told them, in the language of Holy Writ, there was a time for all things—a time to preach, and a time to pray—but that these times had now passed; and then, in a voice that reached the hearts of all who heard him, and which re-echoed through the church like a trumpet blast of war, he exclaimed, that "there was a time to *fight*, and that time had now come." Then throwing aside his clerical gown, he stood before them in the full uniform of a Virginian colonel—a girded warrior ready for battle. He ordered the drums to be beat at the church door, and there was formed, in that valley, the celebrated 8th regiment of Virginia—or, as it was more commonly called, the "German Regiment of Virginia," which continued in service until the close of the war, and became one of the most distinguished in the revolutionary army.

Muhlenberg, subsequent to the war, removed from the valley of Virginia to Pennsylvania, and represented your State in the House of Representatives and Senate of the Union, and filled other important offices. I learn to day from his relative, a member of the committee who so politely escorted us from Philadelphia, and who, if he lives, is destined to be your representative in the next Congress—having, as I learn, been nominated by the democratic party by acclamation—that he has now in his possession the original flag of this German Regiment of Virginia. Precious relic! may it continue to inspire in your bosoms the noble patriotism which animated those who so often carried it aloft amidst the storm and carnage of battle.

Your distinguished President has referred to me as being the representative of a portion of the Tenth Legion of Virginia democracy.

In the centre of that great valley there are some three or four prosperous and densely populated counties, which were originally settled almost entirely from this State, and to a great extent from this county. Although not elected as a democrat, but as an INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE, I have the honor to represent upon the floor of the House of Representatives two of those counties. Like yourselves, your descendants in that valley are almost wholly and exclusively democratic. A whig as naturally perishes there as a sucker caught in one of your beautiful streams would perish if thrown upon its bank. Since the days of Thomas Jefferson, those counties have been called the Tenth Legion of Virginia democracy. And well have they been so called, for this has been the Tenth Legion of the mighty Julius of democracy,—the Imperial Guard of Napoleon,—the reserved corps which has never yet failed to turn back the tide of disaster and defeat, and to achieve certain and secure victory. Even in 1840, when the republic seemed to reel and totter under the maddening and intoxicating influence of political frenzy,—when democratic Pennsylvania bowed her head, Virginia stood firm; but she stood firm solely by virtue of this Tenth Legion of her democratic army. My friends, I do not know whether that term is applied to you here, but in my State the county of Berks is familiarly known as the Tenth Legion of Pennsylvania democracy. Can't you propose it to yourselves to acquire a fame as imperishable as that which attaches to your descendants in Virginia? Can't you resolve that Pennsylvania shall never again bow her head in a blind and heedless enthusiasm for mere military renown? A thousand times has the taunt been repeated by your enemies from lip to lip, "Pennsylvania is safe for Scott; Pennsylvania has never yet cast her vote against a military candidate; stick up a man in uniform, put epaulettes upon his shoulders and a plume in his cap, and dub him a general, and all Pennsylvania will follow at his heels." This is the language of taunt and sarcasm in which whigs have indulged, and which has led your Johnstons and your Stevens to propose for your acceptance for the office of President of the United States *the Commander-in-Chief of your Regular Army.* Now, that General Scott does possess real solid, substantial, distinguished military merit, is not to be questioned by me. And it is only a subject of my most profound regret, that such exalted military fame should be seized upon by unprincipled demagogues and knaves, as the means to advance their own selfish and mischievous purposes. But it is for you, my fellow-citizens, to teach these blind advocates of gunpowder availability that they have miscalculated your intelligence and firmness; that you can distinguish between military merit and civil qualifications, and give to each their appropriate rewards; and that in rejecting and repudiating the claims of Winfield Scott for the Presidency, surrounded, as he unhappily is, with the foul miasma of Abolition, you do so, not because you respect the Cæsar of war less, but because you love Rome and her institutions more.

What has given to the democratic party its present commanding power and influence in this confederacy? What must ever make it

the predominant party, so long as it continues faithful to the principles upon which it was originally founded by Jefferson and Madison, of Virginia, and by the two Muhlenbergs—par nobile fratrum—Rush, Dallas, Leiper, Lieb, and others, of your State? Your enemies ascribe its power to causes not very flattering to human nature, nor very honorable to American intelligence and patriotism. But examine its history from 1798 to the present hour, and you will find that the true secret of its strength is to be found in its sacred observance of the limitations, the guarantees, the letter and spirit of our great federal compact. I do not mean to say that within that period there have not been departures—very wide departures—from the true latitude and longitude of constitutional interpretation. But I do mean to say that the democratic party have sought to make the constitution the polar star by which the vessel of State should be steered through the stormy ocean of politics; and whilst the winds of faction, and the occasional mutiny of a portion of the crew, have sometimes driven it from the true line of its direction, it has not been long before it had corrected its log, and placed the old ship, in the language of Mr. Jefferson, "on the true republican tack." We are told in the Holy Scriptures that the gates of hell shall not prevail against that church which is built upon the rock of living and eternal truth. And so I say. Build your party upon the rock—the solid, unchanging, and adamantine rock—of your constitution, and the storms of faction, of federalism, and of free-soilism, will dash in vain against its base.

This constitution was the work of great and illustrious men—of men of mighty intellects, of tried patriotism, of exalted public virtue. It bears upon every page of it the breathing of a divine power, moulding with consummate skill the destinies of the greatest republic on earth. It was made at a period when the heart of the nation was purified from all selfishness, and when all its pulsations responded to the true glory and happiness of the people. It took time to perfect it—it required sacrifices from all sections to mature it—and when finally adopted, confusion and chaos hid their heads, and it emerged above the horizon as a second sun in the heavens, diffusing light and heat and gladness over this continent.

Gentlemen, there are provisions in that great national covenant under which you of the North have prospered in commercial, in manufacturing, and in agricultural wealth, beyond any example in the records of the human race. And while we of the South have not prospered in commerce, or manufactures, or agriculture, as you have done, yet there are provisions in that instrument under which we of the South have expected to find quiet and repose, domestic tranquillity and peace.

It is known to you, gentlemen, that there existed at the formation of our Union, in most of the Northern and in all of the Southern States, the institution of African slavery. With you it was regarded but as a temporary interest; with us it existed in such numbers, and was so intimately interwoven with all our social habits, as to have acquired the character of a fixed and permanent institution amongst us. It is not for me here to inquire how and by whose capital and enterprise slavery was introduced amongst us. It is sufficient for you and me to know that it did

exist, and that the great patriots and statesmen of that day had to consider it deeply and profoundly in arranging the terms of our national compact.

Now, two of the fundamental principles agreed upon by our fathers in arranging the basis of our Union were—

1st. That each State should remain sovereign and supreme in all matters relating to its own local concerns, and should be the sole and exclusive judge of its own domestic policy; that no power beyond the limits of that State should interfere, directly or indirectly, with its own local and peculiar institutions. This threw upon the people of each State the sole responsibility for its own domestic policy, and relieved the federal government, and the people of all other States, from any responsibility whatsoever in regard to it. And the people of Massachusetts and the people of Pennsylvania have no more right to interfere with the sort of labor which we choose to use in Virginia than we have the right to prescribe to you that you shall use mules instead of your fine Conestoga horses, or the Angora goats, in place of sheep.

But there was another principle agreed upon no less important than the first—and it was this: that inasmuch as our slaves might readily escape into the free States, a power should exist somewhere that would enable us to reclaim them. This power might have been left to the States in which the fugitive sought an asylum, and certainly every principle of good neighborhood, of fraternal sympathy, and of international courtesy, would have required and justified its exercise by the States. But it was deemed most expedient to devolve that authority upon the national government, because its jurisdiction was co-extensive with the limits of the whole Union; because it was a government in which the South could be represented, and upon which it could rely for a faithful enforcement of the stipulation, and because it thereby relieved the anti-slavery feeling of any particular State from all responsibility of action in the matter.

Now, of the vast and overshadowing importance of this provision of the federal compact to the South no reflecting man can entertain a doubt. It is not the mere money value of the slaves who escape into the free States which has aroused the united action of the South on this question. It is the fact, well known to us, that if such a provision did not exist in the constitution, and was not faithfully enforced, a spirit of insubordination would very probably be infused into our slave population that would lead to the most fearful and tragic consequences. Let no man, then, suppose that when the South assumes the position which she has done on this question, she is governed by any mere consideration of dollars and cents. She is acting upon the solemn conviction that upon the faithful execution of this plain and express guarantee of the constitution depend her domestic tranquillity and peace. And we are forced to regard all men in the free States who stimulate opposition to the fugitive slave law, and who seek to frustrate and nullify its provisions, as not merely violating an express obligation of the constitution, but as seeking to enact that "*drama of blood*" which Governor Johnston, in his earlier and better days, charged to be the purpose of those who sought to embarrass the legal rights of the slave-

holder. We are compelled to regard all such persons as enemies to the South, and as enemies to the Union [Cheers.]

We of the South do not ask you gentlemen of the free States to love the institution of slavery, or to think of it otherwise than as you think proper. We have never made any such demand upon you. We have never claimed to exercise any such constraint over your opinions. It is the false allegation—the false issue which the enemies of your peace and my peace, and the peace of the Union, make for the purpose of stimulating sectional agitation for their own vile and nefarious purposes. All that we ask of you, gentlemen, is to act upon this question as sound patriots and as honest men. We ask you to love and obey the constitution of your country. We ask you, as honest men, to accord to us those rights which our great national covenant secures to us, and which we have purchased with a price. We ask you to maintain the principles of that federal Union which was framed by your fathers and mine—by patriots who, shoulder to shoulder, had poured out their best blood in the war of our Revolution. We ask you to discharge with fidelity the great national obligations which you have assumed to discharge, and which you cannot refuse to discharge without heaping dishonor and infamy upon the memory of your patriotic ancestors, and committing moral treason against the constitution of your country. Is this asking more than we have a right to expect? [Cries of No! no! from the crowd—you shall have it!] I know, gentlemen, we shall get it from the northern democrats. But I fear I should look in vain for any such response from northern whigs.

Now, one of the great and distinguishing features between the whig and the democratic parties of this State—at least since my attention has been specially drawn to the inquiry—is, that whilst the whig party of your State has been seeking to gain power by pandering to anti-masonry, native-Americanism, and to all those crude and uninformed anti-slavery prejudices that may be so easily aroused in every human bosom in those States in which the institution does not exist and cannot be known, the democratic party of the North, and more particularly of your State, has manifested a fixed and determined purpose to oppose itself to this unwise and dangerous agitation, to stand by the constitution, and to preserve inviolate the rights secured by that instrument. The just, patriotic, and constitutional course of the democracy of Pennsylvania has been fully observed and gratefully acknowledged in the South.

It was for this reason, amongst others, that so large a portion of the South has of late years directed its attention to a great and distinguished statesman of your commonwealth—that gentleman who presides this day with so much dignity over your meeting. [Cheers.] The feeling of confidence which Virginia cherishes for the democracy of Pennsylvania was forcibly illustrated in the recent national convention held at Baltimore. Pennsylvania's favorite son was Virginia's unchanging choice. For thirty-three successive ballots, and until all hope of the accomplishment of her wishes failed, Virginia presented an unbroken front for your noble and glorious son, James Buchanan. [Cheers.] And richly did he earn the compliment thus bestowed upon him. His gigantic intellect, his long and distinguished public services, his uniform

respect for the guarantied rights of the South, his fidelity to the constitution, his love of the Union, had designated him as one worthy of the most exalted honors of this republic. [Cheers.]

Now let me illustrate this distinctive difference between the two parties in Pennsylvania by a reference to a few facts.

We of the South are in the habit of regarding the position of parties in the North upon the fugitive slave law, as presenting an infallible test of constitutional orthodoxy. And why? Because it is a plainly-written provision of the constitution—clear, distinct, positive—admitting of no evasion or equivocation; and the man who would nullify that provision, would strike down the whole instrument whenever it suited his purpose. Again, because the Supreme Court of the United States has solemnly announced that the act of 1793 was delusive and inefficient for the objects contemplated by the constitution, and that we were entitled to a full and adequate remedy from the national government. Now, I maintain that any party that would throw itself in direct opposition to the plain requirements of the constitution of the United States, and in opposition to the solemn adjudication of the highest judicial tribunal in the land, and do so, for the purpose of waging a reckless and unprincipled warfare against our peace and happiness, cannot be expected to command much of *our* respect and confidence, and ought not to command the respect and confidence of any portion of the country.

Let us, then, for a moment look at the course of the two parties upon this great and vital question.

In the Senate of the United States not one single *northern whig senator* is found to vote for the passage of the bill.

In the House of Representatives it received the vote of *one* solitary whig member from the northern States, and two whig members from the northwestern States.

But this would lead me into too extensive a field of inquiry. My object is to examine the course of parties in this State, and to that I will for the present restrict myself.

You had two Senators in Congress—Daniel Sturgeon and James Cooper—the first, a democrat; the second, a whig; Sturgeon, the democrat, voted for the bill; Cooper, the whig, against it.

In the House of Representatives, the same state of things was exhibited. Of your twenty-four members, every whig whose vote was recorded—and ten are so recorded—was found in opposition to the bill. Every democrat whose vote stands recorded, is found in support of the bill.

There was, as usual upon exciting test-questions, some *dodging;* but that would seem to have been principally confined to whigs, as I would infer, at least, from a pretty coarse practical joke perpetrated by Thaddeus Stevens, of your State—himself a whig, and as appears on the pages of the *Congressional Globe.*

After the passage of the bill, Mr. Stevens rose and suggested to the Speaker to send a page and notify the *whig* members of the House that the Fugitive Slave Bill had been disposed of, and that they could now come back into the Hall. (Laughter.)

Look also to your own State legislation and State action. After the Compromise measures passed, the democratic party proceeded in good

faith to facilitate their execution, and to bring the whole weight and power of their party to maintain and uphold them. In your State conventions and county conventions you declared:

Resolved, That the democratic party of Pennsylvania are true to the Union, the Constitution, and the laws, and will faithfully observe and execute, so far as in them lies, all the measures of compromise adopted by the late Congress for the purpose of settling the questions arising out of domestic slavery; and this, not only from a sense of duty as good citizens of the Republic, but also from the kind and fraternal feelings which they cherish towards their brethren of the slave-holding States.

Again, at a subsequent convention the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That the democracy of Pennsylvania will maintain with fidelity and energy the faithful execution of the Fugitive Slave Law; and that we pledge ourselves to use our best efforts to secure the speedy repeal of such portions of the "State Obstruction Law" as deny the use of our jails for the detention of fugitives from labor while awaiting their trial, or in any other manner interfere with the constitutional rights of citizens of our sister States, in relation to their property.

Most nobly have you redeemed your pledges to the constitution and to your southern brethren. Early in 1851 you did, in opposition to the unanimous vote of the whig party, pass through both houses of your General Assembly an act repealing the most obnoxious sections of the unconstitutional obstruction law of 1847. But your sound and patriotic purposes were, for the time, frustrated by the veto of Wm. F. Johnston, the whig Governor of your State. Did you pause in your patriotic exertions here? No! You nailed the flag of the constitution to your mast-head, and took an appeal to the people of Pennsylvania. You re-affirmed your declaration to maintain the constitutional rights of the South. You nominated the gallant Bigler as your standard-bearer, and you made a direct issue with your opponents on this question. What was the result? Why, that result which always follows a faithful observance of the constitution. The abolition forces were routed. The constitution was maintained, and democracy was triumphant; and the repealing law, which Johnston vetoed, was again passed by a democratic legislature against a solid whig vote, and approved by a democratic governor.

Now what was the course of the whig party during all this time? Why, the very reverse of yours. They were for overthrowing the constitution, whilst you were nobly maintaining it.

Why, gentlemen, in the whig convention which assembled in July, 1852, and which nominated Scott for the Presidency, and Johnston for Governor, the following resolution was submitted for its adoption, and voted down by an overwhelming majority:

Resolved, *That the provisions of the constitution* in reference to the rendition of fugitives held to service or labor demand, and *shall receive from our party*, a faithful, manly, and unequivocal support.

This was voted down in a whig convention of this State, by an overwhelming vote. Mark its language! It is not that the provisions of the *Fugitive Slave Law* passed by Congress, but that *provisions of the constitution*, shall receive their support; and this resolution was voted down by the whig party of Pennsylvania! thus exhibiting the spectacle of infernal fiends assaulting the very citadel of Heaven—the very constitution of the land itself.

Now, gentlemen, you may see the force and bearing of some remarks embraced in Mr. Fillmore's last annual message to Congress. I will read you a few lines from it, and you will see how he impales these moral traitors before the public gaze:

"Some objections have been urged against the details of the act for the return of fugitives from labor; but it is worthy of remark that the main opposition is aimed *against the constitution itself*, and proceeds from persons and classes of persons, many of whom declare their wish to see that constitution overturned. They avow their hostility to any law which shall give full and practical effect to this requirement of the constitution.

"*Cases have heretofore arisen in which individuals* have denied the binding authority *of acts of Congress*, and even States have proposed to nullify such acts, upon the ground that the constitution was the supreme law of the land, and that those acts of Congress were repugnant to that instrument; *but nullification is now aimed, not so much against particular laws as being inconsistent with the constitution as against the constitution itself*, and it is not to be disguised that a spirit exists, and has been actively at work, to rend asunder this Union, which is our cherished inheritance from our revolutionary fathers."

Is it surprising, when you look to the respective opinions entertained by the whig party of Pennsylvania, and by Millard Fillmore, that he should have received, in fifty-four ballots, but one single vote from the whig party of your State in the late National Convention? It can surprise no one.

Perhaps one of the most striking illustrations of this distinguishing characteristic between the northern whig and democratic parties is to be found in the course of William F. Johnston, late whig Governor of your State. You will thus perceive how the same man may perform the functions of a political chameleon, and reflect through his transparent skin the color and complexion of the party to which he at the time belongs.

In 1837 Governor Johnston was a democrat, and a member of the House of Delegates of Pennsylvania, from the county of Armstrong. On the 27th of January, of that year, a petition was presented to the House, praying the Legislature to grant the trial by jury to fugitive slaves. How did the democratic representative of the county of Armstrong then meet this proposition? He denounced it in the following just and appropriate remarks. I can only take a short extract from his speech:

"Suppose, sir, we would legitimately act upon this prayer of the petitioners, (giving the right of trial by jury to slaves,) would it be politic in this House to do so? By the original compact between the States, Pennsylvania has recognised the right of the southern man in the property of his slave; and she has no right to pass laws which would embarrass the recovery of his property. Can the owner of the slave be expected to undergo the delays of a jury trial, the procrastination of the law, and the expense incident thereof? *It would almost amount to a positive prevention to the recovery of his legal right*, and particularly when we take into consideration the fact, that in many of the counties of the Commonwealth a large and respectable portion of the citizens have *conscientious scruples* upon the subject of slavery, which would most effectually prevent the recovery of the slave. It appeared to him, that if such an act were passed, it would virtually amount to the emancipation of every negro who might be fortunate enough to escape the pursuit of his master and put his foot in Pennsylvania. *Such action would be the first act in that drama of blood which some men appear to be so anxious to bring upon the country.* Let these infatuated and misled philanthropists pursue their own course, but he confidently hoped this House would refuse to endorse their errors."

Now, what was the course of this same Wm. F. Johnston in 1850 and 1851, after he had abandoned the democratic party, and when he stood forward the embodiment and representative of Pennsylvania whiggery? Is it not as notorious as any fact in the history of your

State politics, that, as the whig candidate for the office of Governor, he denounced the fugitive slave act in the most unmeasured terms, from one end of the State to the other, and especially the feature denying a jury trial? It has been well said, what is to be thought of that religion which worships a monkey for its God? And I say, what is to be thought of that party in your State which now seems to breathe only through the nostrils of Wm. F. Johnston? Gov. Johnston cannot plead ignorance as an apology. His speech in 1837 shows that he had a full perception of that "drama of blood" which he was so zealously struggling to see enacted upon our southern soil, and that he was, with his eyes open, and with a clear view of the consequences of his act, perpetrating a violent outrage against the constitution of his country, and against the peace of his brethren of the South. [Immense cheering.]

How strikingly in contrast with the course of Governor Johnston was the conduct of his democratic predecessor—the lamented Gov. Shunk—and has been that of his democratic successor, Governor Bigler.

In the summer of 1847 I had several slaves stolen from me, which were carried to Pennsylvania. The slaves were very promptly returned. I made a demand through the Governor of Virginia upon Gov. Shunk, of Pennsylvania, for the surrender of the fugitive from justice, upon the sole and exclusive charge of his having committed a *felony*, under the laws of Virginia, *in stealing my slaves*. In a similar case from Virginia, I well know that Governor Seward, of New York, had declined to comply with the demand, and for reasons fatal to the peace of the country. I did not know much of Governor Shunk; and as he was then in the midst of an excited canvass for the office of Governor, I thought it quite likely that he would resort to the usual delays of temporizing politicians, and, like Governor Johnston, keep my demand in his *breeches-pocket* until after the election. But I soon found that Gov. Shunk (eternal honor to his memory) knew his constitutional duties, and had the firmness to discharge them. In other words, I soon learned that he was a democrat; and as rapidly as the mail could carry my letter to him, and his reply to me, I received a warrant from him under the seal of your State, and with his bold and manly signature appended to it, calling all the civil and judicial officers of your State to *arrest the felon*. [Cheers.] I gave myself no further concern about the fugitive, as I was sufficiently satisfied in seeing the constitution of the country so nobly vindicated by a democratic Governor of Pennsylvania, and the atrocious doctrines of Wm. H. Seward rejected and discountenanced by an authority equal in intellect and far superior in political virtue to his late excellency the Governor of New York.

Mr. Faulkner here proceeded to state his objections to the election of General Scott. He had none to his private or to his military character. He was prepared to concede to him all the qualifications of a gentleman and of a successful and distinguished military leader. His objections were wholly political. He was the candidate, and as such was forced upon the country by that portion of the northern whig party which had for years been making capital by the agitation of the subject of slavery, and by warring against the constitution and the rights of the South. Scott was emphatically a sectional candidate. His election

would give a new and vigorous impulse to that Abolition feeling which presented a topic of greatest danger to the permanency of the Union. If Scott was personally sound, it would not be in accordance with human nature to suppose that he could throw off the influence of those who elevated him to the office of President of the United States. If elected, he must know he will be indebted for that honor to the anti-slavery sentiment of the North. Amongst that party he must find his confidential friends and advisers. Under him, they must acquire influence and power. His destiny and theirs are inseparably connected, and it is idle for any man to suppose that he can elect Scott without giving a commanding power to Seward, Johnston, and all that class of politicians who have lived upon the pernicious agitation which they have for years been fomenting.

The whigs of the North had dealt treacherously with the whigs of the South. Under the pretension that they were the conservative constitutional party of the Union, they have succeeded in inducing many honest and patriotic men of the South to combine with them. They had used the South to promote their selfish and mercenary schemes, so far as the powers of the federal government could be stretched to promote them. But when the first occasion occurred to manifest whether they had any real respect for the constitution, or any sympathy with their southern brethren, they proved false to the constitution and to the South. They voted in a body against recognising rights solemnly secured to us by the plain language of the compact. Scott is now before the country, the creature, the representative of the same sentiment of feeling of the North. It is manifest, from the exhibition of the last several years, that the South can alone find any security for its rights in a firm and cordial alliance with the democracy of the North.

The democracy, guided by that overruling Providence which seems to prosper all its measures, and to connect in one destiny *its* triumphs and the glory of our common country, has selected a ticket which I can support with my whole heart. Unambitious of office, and yet ready to obey his country's call, in peace or war, whenever the public good demands it, Franklin Pierce dreamt as little of the high destiny which now awaits him, as Cincinnatus whilst toiling at his plough. No nomination in the present condition of the country could have been less liable to any sectional or personal objection, and none could have been hailed with more universal favor by the country. By birth and residence a northern man, the South has unbounded confidence in him, because his whole public career indicates a statesman of the most enlarged and comprehensive American feeling. To use his own emphatic declaration, he knows "no North, no South, no East, no West, under the constitution, but a sacred maintenance of the common bond, and a true devotion to the common brotherhood."

This has been called the canvass of "falsehood and frauds," and such it truly has been. Without resorting to falsehood, what could be said against Franklin Pierce? At first he was charged with being a drunkard; but that soon sunk into the kennel of loathsome and forgotten calumnies. Then he was charged with intolerance to his Catholic fellow-citizens; but these very Catholics promptly rose *en masse*, with their reverend pastor at their head, and pronounced the statement false.

Then came the Foss fabrication, but that has now sunk to the tomb o the Capulets. The whigs have one fact left, and upon that they exhaus all the powers of their wit and eloquence. "General Pierce fainted o the battle-field of Churubusco!" Well, gentlemen, the fact is so We can't deny it. General Pierce did faint on the battle-field of Churu busco; and yet the man who could reproach him with that fact is des titute of an American heart in his bosom, and is no better than a Mexi can dog. It is the proudest incident in the military history of Frankli Pierce. Hear what General Scott and General Pillow say. [Mr. F here read the official accounts of the action from the despatches o Scott, Pillow, &c.]

And this is the incident that is made the subject of whig jest, of whi wit, and of whig buffoonery. General Pierce is not the first brave ma that ever fainted upon a battle-field. Messena—the brave Marsha Messena—he whom Napoleon called his right arm—whom history ha styled the favorite child of victory—whom poetry and song have chaunte as the thunderbolt of war—fainted upon one of the bloodiest fields o his fame, and from the same causes that caused General Pierce t faint—pain and bodily exhaustion; and if the whigs will have it so, l history then designate Pierce as the fainting Messena of the Mexica war—as one whose gallant spirit led where his frail, diseased, an worn-down body could not follow; and believe me, gentlemen, if poetr or painting shall ever do justice to that historical scene, it will paint th prostrate body of the wounded and exhausted soldier stretched upo the ground, whilst his gallant spirit will be seen to hover over the smok and carnage of battle, cheering his comrades on to victory, and sighin that it cannot mingle in the dread affray.

One word more, and I am done. As I told you in the opening o my remarks, I came here to see with my own eyes, and to hear wit my own ears, how far the democracy of Pennsylvania mean to stan by the constitutional rights of the South. I know what politicians hav said, and I know what conventions have said; but I wish to hear fro the people themselves what they have to say. When I return to Vi ginia—to the bosom of my own constituents—shall I be able to t them that fidelity to all the guarantees of the constitution is, and co tinues to be, a cardinal principle of democratic faith? ["You may- you may!" came from a hundred voices in the crowd.] That yo will never cease to war with the whigs of your State, until every rig secured to us by that sacred compact is fully recognised and enforce [We will! the constitution must be preserved!" declared several voic from the crowd, to which the whole meeting responded.] Then, ge tlemen, I go away satisfied. I have an answer, not from politicians conventions, but from the great masses of the people themselves, a you have furnished me an armor more impenetrable than the sevenfo shield of Achilles. [Mr. Faulkner took his seat, when three cheers we given for the speaker and the Tenth Legion of Virginia democracy.]

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